Deciding about “fitness and readiness”

The constitutional requirements for determining a candidate’s “fitness and readiness” to be considered for a call requiring ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament are laid out in G-2.0607, “Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service” (see section in the Advisory Handbook). But a presbytery will also need to establish “mechanisms and processes” (G-3.0307) whereby it will decide with its candidates when it is appropriate for them to undertake “final assessment.” Just as there have been some traditional “outcomes of inquiry” (see “Deciding about ‘suitability for ordered ministry,’” in the Advisory Handbook), there have also been some customary “outcomes of candidacy.” Those that are not listed in G-2.0607 as specifically belonging to “final assessment” may provide some guidance to presbyteries and candidates in thinking about indications that the formal “final assessment” is warranted.

The traditional “outcomes of candidacy” have included:

- Presenting evidence of competence in the fields of Reformed theology, Bible, the polity of the PC(USA), and worship and Sacraments, and evidence of ministerial skill attested through the supervised practice of ministry
- Expressing theological views that are compatible, in the opinion of the presbytery, with the confessional documents of the church
- Expressing understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination (W-4.0404) informed by knowledge of the church in diverse settings
- Revealing commitment to service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with personal maturity, spiritual depth, and a capacity to respond to the needs of others, including colleagues in ministry
- Presenting a written sermon, together with a description of the contemporary need to which it was addressed and an exegetical interpretation of the biblical material out of which the sermon arose (Some presbyteries may require that such a sermon be preached before the presbytery or a committee thereof as a part of the appearance of the candidate for consideration for a specific call or as a component of the examination for ordination.)

A presbytery may include these and/or other tasks either in its processes for overseeing the preparation of all its candidates, or may form requirements specific to particular candidates based on reports and consultations with them. Either way, it is advisable that whatever requirements are set be included in the covenant agreements so that expectations are clear among all parties.

How would you decide which tasks best indicate when a candidate should receive “final assessment”?  
What tasks might be assigned for reporting at “final assessment” as evidence of the qualities listed in G-2.0607a?